

12 FAM 140 COURIER DOCUMENTATION AND STATUS

12 FAM 141 PROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTERS

12 FAM 141.1 General

(TL:DS-31; 6-16-93)

a. Courier letters are required for couriers to convey sealed diplomatic pouches across international boundaries free from inspection and electronic surveillance, including x-ray.

b. For the professional courier letter to be effective, the accompanying material must be carried in an appropriately marked and sealed container (see 5 FAH-10). The container or pouch must also bear a diplomatic pouch tag endorsed with both an origination and destination address in accordance with 5 FAH-10 .

c. Diplomatic couriers will retain this special letter on their person for identification, in addition to their diplomatic passports, during official travel while serving in this capacity. (See 12 FAM 141 Exhibit 141.1 for a sample professional courier letter.)

12 FAM 141.2 Issuance

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. The Department (DS/CIS/DC) issues each professional diplomatic courier a one-page courier letter bearing a seal and the signature of the current Secretary of State. When the official whose signature is affixed to the letter becomes a former Secretary of State, DS/CIS/DC issues a new letter bearing a seal and the signature of that Secretary's successor for each professional courier.

b. Courier letters remain valid until cancelled or until such time as specified in the letter itself, usually five years after issuance.

12 FAM 141.3 Cancellation

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. DS/CIS/DC, the principal officer at post, or the RDCO shall cancel the courier letter either when a new letter is issued or upon termination of any em-

ployee's duties as a diplomatic courier, e.g., when a courier retires, resigns, or transfers to other duties.

b. To cancel a professional courier letter, DS/CIS/DC, the principal officer at post, or the RDCO mutilates the seal by perforating with a machine or writing in indelible ink the word "Cancelled" across its face;

c. Return the cancelled courier letter to the employee and report the cancellation to DS/CIS/DC by memorandum.

12 FAM 142 NONPROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTERS

12 FAM 142.1 General

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. Nonprofessional courier letters serve the same purpose as professional courier letters, i.e., they allow couriers to transport sealed diplomatic pouches across international boundaries free from inspection and electronic surveillance, including x-ray. See section 12 FAM 425.8 for conditions which may warrant a nonprofessional courier.

b. For the nonprofessional courier letter to be effective, the accompanying material must be carried in an appropriately marked and sealed pouch or container (see 5 FAH-10). The pouch or container must also bear a diplomatic pouch tag endorsed with both an origination and destination address in accordance with 5 FAH-10 . Refer any deviations from this addressee requirement to the Information Security Programs Division (DS/IST/ISP) (section 12 FAM 425.8).

c. Do not use nonprofessional courier letters as documentation for classified or administratively controlled materials removed from official premises of posts for overnight personal custody. See section 12 FAM 1055.1 .

12 FAM 142.2 Issuance

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. The principal officer at post, a RDCO, or DS/CIS/DC issues courier letters to nonprofessional couriers. (See 12 FAM 142 Exhibit 142.2 for a sample nonprofessional courier letter.)

b. The principal officer, DS/CIS/DC, or the RDCO may issue a courier letter to a nonprofessional courier to transport diplomatic pouches across international boundaries provided that:

(1) Professional courier service is not available (see section 12 FAM 1058.11-1);

(2) The person to be designated as a courier is a U.S. citizen employee of the mission and possesses a Top Secret clearance;

(3) The person has been issued a diplomatic passport, or the Director of DS/CIS/DC has approved the use of an official passport; and

(4) The RSO, PSO, or RDCO has briefed the nonprofessional courier designee. In the absence of an RSO, PSO, or RDCO, the information programs officer (IPO) should give the briefing.

c. Issuing offices must notify the Director for DS/CIS/DC and the RDCO via a priority telegram that a nonprofessional courier letter is being issued to transport pouches across an international boundary. The telegram includes:

(1) Travel dates;

(2) Itinerary;

(3) Trip justification; and

(4) The courier letter number for the intended nonprofessional courier trip.

d. A courier letter is generally not required for transporting pouches between an embassy and a consulate or between consulates within the same country, i.e., trips which do not cross international borders. However, a post may issue a nonprofessional courier letter either when local authorities require one or when the post determines that the letter is required to ensure the protection of official materials. For such in-country trips, couriers may use an official passport, and notification to DS/CIS/DC or RDCO is not required.

e. At post, the principal officer or designee signs each nonprofessional courier letter issued and impresses it with the post's official seal.

12 FAM 142.3 Reporting

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. Posts that have regular, established nonprofessional courier trips across international borders which are funded by DS shall report to DS/CIS/DC the number of trips once a year no later than January 15.

b. Posts must account for each letter that they assign, and at year's end must report to DS/CIS/DC the total number of "emergency" or "ad hoc" nonprofessional courier letters issued for the entire year. Posts having both regular and ad hoc trips across international borders report two, separate totals. No reports are required for in-country runs.

c. Charging nonprofessional courier trip expenses against the courier allotment requires RDCO authorization. An RDCO will only authorize funding for those trips which would normally be a professional courier's routine responsibility.

12 FAM 142.4 Cancellation

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

a. Upon completion of a special mission for which a courier letter was issued, the nonprofessional courier gives the courier letter to either the RSO or the pouch control officer (5 FAM) of the post to which the pouch is delivered.

b. Unless DS/CIS/DC authorizes further use of the courier letter, an officer whom the principal officer has authorized to cancel nonprofessional courier letters immediately does so by cutting or perforating the seal and/or by writing in indelible ink the word "Cancelled" across its face.

c. Post may return the cancelled nonprofessional courier letter to the employee.

d. When ending a courier mission in Washington, D.C., a nonprofessional shall submit the courier letter to DS/CIS/DC for cancellation.

12 FAM 143 DIPLOMATIC STATUS

12 FAM 143.1 Professional Courier Status

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

Professional couriers maintain immunity from the time they depart from their duty station until their return to the same duty station. (See paragraphs 5 and 6 of 12 FAM 111 Exhibit 111.2 and TIAS 6820.)

12 FAM 143.2 Nonprofessional Courier Status

(TL:DS-39; 8-15-94)

Non-professional couriers maintain immunity only while the pouches are under their control. The immunity ceases once the pouches have been signed for. (See paragraph 6 of 12 FAM 111 Exhibit 111.2 and TIAS 6820.) Immunity for in-country accredited officers serving as nonprofessional couriers is not terminated by completion of a courier delivery.

12 FAM 144 THROUGH 149 UNASSIGNED

12 FAM 141 Exhibit 141.1

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER

EXHIBIT 141.1

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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No. 111

TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

I, the undersigned, Secretary of State of the United States of America, hereby request all those whom it may concern to afford all such facilities as may be necessary to permit

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Richard Roe
U.S. Diplomatic Courier

the bearer of official property of the United States of America between the Department of State at Washington, D.C. and the Embassies and Consulates of the United States of America, to pass safely and freely in fulfillment of this mission without examination of the official property in question which is under seal; and in case of need, to provide all lawful aid and protection.

I further request all whom it may concern to extend to the holder all privileges and immunities which may expedite passage on this urgent mission with which said Diplomatic Courier has been charged on behalf of the United States of America.

This courier letter is issued only to individuals regularly employed as Diplomatic Couriers and is given solely for the purpose hereinbefore indicated. This letter is valid for a period of five years from date of issue, with the expressed understanding that it will be returned to the Department of State for cancellation on the termination of the bearer's employment.

In the event of an emergency concerning this courier, please contact the Department of State, DS Command Center, Washington, D.C.; telephone: (202) 663-0812.

Given under my hand and seal of the Department of State of the United States of America at Washington this Sixth day of March in the year of our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-four and the year after the Independence of the United States of America, the Two Hundred and Eighteenth.

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Secretary of State
of the United States of America

(Foil Embossed
Department Seal)

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Preparation Guide

EXHIBIT 141.1

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER—continued

Preparation Guide

Numbers below correspond to the circled numbers in the example.

The term “fill-in” indicates that these are variables plugged into the standard format.

1. Use 8” x 13” embossed seal Department letterhead.
2. Department and issuing location.
3. Number assigned by the Director for Diplomatic Couriers (fill-in).
4. Individual’s name and position title (fill-in).
5. The period of time of validity for the letter (normally five years).
6. Date of issuance (day, month, and current year; fill-in).
7. The ordinal number of the current year since the year of the Independence of the United States (subtract 1776 from the current year; fill-in).
8. The signature of the Secretary of State.
9. An official foil Department of State seal impressed by Authentications (A/OPR/FMSS/GS/AUTH, located in SA-35, 202-634-6645).

12 FAM 142 Exhibit 142.2

SAMPLE NONPROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER

EXHIBIT 142.2

SAMPLE NONPROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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No. 111

TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

I, the undersigned, Secretary of State of the United States of America, hereby request all whom it may concern to permit John Doe

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acting as diplomatic courier between the Department of State at Washington, D.C. and the

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American Embassy at Kiev, Ukraine, and the bearer of official property of the Government of the United States of America, to pass safely and freely in fulfillment of this mission without examination of the official property in question which is under seal; and in case of need, to provide all lawful aid and protection.

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I further request all whom it may concern to extend to Mr. Doe any or all privileges or facilities which may expedite passage of this urgent mission.

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This letter is authorized solely for the single journey indicated herein and issued with the expressed understanding that it must be surrendered to the Courier Service (DS/DC), SA-10, Room 518, Department of State, for cancellation. This courier letter is valid for a period of

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ten days from date of issue. In the event of an emergency concerning this courier, please contact the Department of State, DS Command Center, Washington, D.C. telephone: (202) 663-0812.

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Given under my hand and seal of the Department of State of the United States at Washington, D.C. this Fourteenth day of September in the year of our Lord, Nineteen

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Hundred and Ninety-four and the year after the Independence of the United States of America, the Two Hundred and Eighteenth.

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Secretary of State
of the United States of America

[Foil Embossed
Official Seal]

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Preparation Guide

EXHIBIT 142.2

SAMPLE NONPROFESSIONAL COURIER LETTER—continued

Preparation Guide

Nonprofessional courier letters may be issued at the Department, post, or a regional diplomatic courier office (RDCO), and vary, depending upon the location where the letter is issued. The letter in the exhibit has been prepared as one issued at the Department.

Numbers below correspond to the circled numbers in the example.

The term “fill-in” indicates that these are variables plugged into the standard format.

1. Use post letterhead or 8” x 13” Department embossed seal letterhead.
2. Post name (or Department of State) and issuing location.
3. Number (fill-in) assigned:
 - (1) Department—Director for Diplomatic Couriers;
 - (2) Post—Principal officer.
4. Individual’s name (fill-in).
5. Department of State or the name of the issuing embassy/consulate or regional diplomatic courier office and its location (fill-in).
6. The name of the destination post (embassy, consulate, etc.; or Department of State) and its location (fill-in).
7. Individual’s honorific and surname (fill-in).
8. Location at which nonprofessional courier delivers courier letter for cancellation:
 - (1) Department—Include the phrase “to the Courier Service (DS/DC), SA-10, Room 518, Department of State,” as shown in the example;
 - (2) For post-originated letters omit the phrase given in item 1 immediately above and insert the phrase “at (fill-in: the location at which the nonprofessional courier completes delivery of pouches)” (see section 142.4).
9. Number of days from date of issuance until anticipated date of final delivery (fill-in):
10. Date of issuance (day, month, and current year; fill-in) assigned:
 - (1) Department—Director for Diplomatic Couriers;
 - (2) Post—Principal officer.
11. Current year (fill-in).
12. The ordinal number of the current year from the year of the Independence of the United States (subtract 1776 from the current year; fill-in).
13. The signature:
 - (1) Department—The Secretary of State;
 - (2) Post—The chief of mission or principal officer, followed by typed name and title.
14. An impressed official seal:
 - (1) Department—An official foil Department of State seal impressed by Authentications (A/OPR/FMSS/GS/AUTH, located in SA-35, 202-634-6645).
 - (2) Post—The post’s official seal impressed by the consular section.

